GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:208
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2002
DISPARITIES IN OPPORTUNITIES FOR GETTING EDUCATION
ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN;LAXMAN GILUWA

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are disparities in the opportunities for getting education;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the efforts made by the Government to reduce those disparities;

(c) whether the poor and the rural youths are deprived of opportunities for higher education; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government and the efforts being made by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINIS OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERED TO IN REPLY TO THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.208 REPLYO N3.12.2002 REGARDING DISPARITIES IN OPPORTUNITIES FOR GETTING EDUCATION ASKED BY SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN AND SHRI LAXMAN GILUWA:

Providing equal opportunities of education to all is a continuous process and constant efforts are being made in this regard. The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, as modified in 1992, provides for a National System of Education which implies that, up to a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex, have access to education of a comparable quality. It includes a common educational structure, a national curriculum framework and minimum levels of learning for each stage of education. Access is an important consideration in all schemes of different sectors of education. In the sector of elementary education, in order to fulfill its constitutional obligation, Government has recently launched `Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan` to provide free and compulsory quality education of 8 years to all children between the age of 6 years and 14 years.

2. The NPE and its Programme of Action also provides for a definite edge for education in rural areas as well as for the disadvantaged groups. Pursuant to this, a number of schemes are under various stages of implementation, which predominantly address the educational needs of the poor and the rural areas. In the Higher Education Sector, the University Grants Commission is implementing various `Equity and Access` schemes such as `Remedial Coaching for the SC/ST, Minorities and other disadvantaged groups, schemes for Coaching for enabling SC/ST students to pass NET as well as for their entry in the services. There is a provision for relaxation of basic requirements as well as reservation in case of disadvantaged groups taking the NET. In addition to the formal stream of education system, large opportunities are also available to disadvantaged groups for pursuing their courses through the distance education mode. While the National Institute of Open Schooling provides access for education at the school level, IGNOU, with its large number of study centers, many of which are in rural areas, and through the educational channels of Gyan Darshan and Gyan Vani, caters to the needs of the youth for higher education. Government has also set up the National Council of Rural Institutes for promotion of rural higher education on the lines of Mahatma Gandhi`s ideas on education.